

4 June 1982

NOTE FOR:

25X1

FROM : Hal Ford

SUBJECT : Your Proposed Memo on the Force of Continuity
in Soviet Foreign Policy

1. George Kolt and I have discussed your proposal for an interpretive essay and we think the idea is fine. Besides, its timing will doubtless prove to have been very fortuitous. Our guidance, below, is meant to help you prepare a strong, useful, and well received paper.

2. The values served by an interpretive NIC memo are principally those of (a) contributing something that is new and unique, or (b) putting a new twist on a familiar subject, or (c) highlighting certain new data which particularly support a certain interpretation. These purposes are furthered all the more by the credibility of the author. Here, in all candor, you have some difficulties facing you as a new officer: you are an unknown commodity to Casey and other senior readers, and your bottom line thesis -- that the force of continuity will prove dominant in Soviet foreign policy -- is a familiar and unexceptional one. Therefore, Casey et al could well ask, what is new in this paper, and what does this new guy bring to it?

3. You will want to proceed in all deliberate speed, but you will be wise not to break into print too soon -- that is, before you have had a chance to demonstrate to the reader that you have really done your homework and are not simply putting forth an a priori point of view. Hence, for a much stronger start on substance, and with reference to the respect you will want to gain from Casey, be sure to read all the principal classified data you can put your hands on on your subject before you break into print, to insure that you have fully augmented your previous reading and study. Also, be sure to have had a number of sessions in depth with the best (classified) analysts in town, and to have listened carefully to their views on data and interpretations.

4. In your concept paper and your draft essay, be sure to have a scope note at the very outset which makes it clear that (a) you are aware that there are a number of forces working for change in foreign policy, but that (b) the thesis you are going to discuss is that such forces are outweighed by those working for continuity. You would do well, also, to describe your theses modestly, as working propositions for further testing.

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5. Your paper, then, will be an accounting of the reasons why you feel the force of continuity will be so strong. In setting forth these forces be sure to spell out in particular the ties which you feel exist between domestic Soviet life/policy and Soviet behavior abroad.

6. Include some examples of what to look for in continuity, in the way of state external behavior. Indicate how you think (a) succession is going to go (in general terms); (b) some of the open as well as hidden policy reexaminations it might trigger, and the factors which you believe will drive toward some specific outcome; and (c) the potential impact on Soviet foreign policy, since this will be the forward-looking section. This should probably be the meat of the paper.

NYJ

cc: VC/NIC
NIC/EXO
NIO/USSR-EE
NIC/AG
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